

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

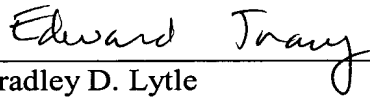
Favorable consideration of this application is respectfully requested.

The present preliminary amendment is submitted to amend the claims. Claims 1 and 6 are amended, Claims 2-5 and 7-16 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new Claims 17-28 are added by the present preliminary amendment. As amended Claims 1 and 6 and new Claims 17-28 are supported by the original disclosure,¹ no new matter is presented.

The present application is believed to be in condition for a full and thorough examination of the merits. An early and favorable consideration of the present application is hereby respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Bradley D. Lytle
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 40,073

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)

Edward Tracy
Registration No. 47,998

I:\ATTY\ET\278274US\278274US-PA.DOC

¹See, e.g., the specification at page 13, line 28 to page 14, line 6 and Figures 1 and 13.